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The Bible and daily living

By Dr. William L. Trimyer

A cup of cold water

Lesson for February 3, 1980
Scripture Reference: John 4:1-42
Focal Passages: John 4:7-11, 25-30, 39

Bridging The Barriers (John 4:1-6)

Nothing is anymore moving in the biblical narrative than the recorded incidents of Jesus' compassionate deeds. Time and again we see Jesus reaching out to minister to people and their immediate needs.

In our lesson this week we see Jesus spanded the cultural prejudices of his time to minister to a Samaritan woman. Samaritans were looked upon as a low class of people. They were avoided at all costs by the Jewish race. Both Jews and Samaritans regarded one another with disdain and suspicion.

Jesus had to overcome numerous taboos in his dealing with the woman of Samaria. In his own life he overthrew the barriers of sex, race, and religion and opted for a response of compassion. Jesus took the time to get to know this woman as a person, and he approached her with a most common request, namely, "Give me a drink of water."

It may be beneficial for Christians to evaluate their prejudices and their modes of evangelism. An evangelism that is not person oriented seeks only to accumulate "scalps" rather than persons. The author remembers being on an elevator in a hospital when his son was very sick. Two men got on with me and began to shove gospel tracts in my face and explained how I could get off the elevator and go to heaven! I returned the tracts and suggested they get to know me and my immediate concerns rather than looking for a new addition to their "hunting" expedition.

Jesus was a person oriented Saviour; he always sought to be compassionate and sensitive to the struggles and needs of those he encountered along the way.

Water That Gives Life (John 4:7-15)

To ask for a drink of water doesn't seem like an unreasonable request. But for a Jew to ask for water from a Samaritan was unthinkable. To add to the drama, Jesus is asking to drink out of the same cup. This is "communion" in the most Christian sense of the word.

How often we as Christians refuse to associate ourselves with people of other cultures, races, or differing religious beliefs. We cut ourselves off and miss the greatest opportunity of forming new and meaningful relationships. Too often race, religious persuasion, or cultural differences become for us barriers which interfere with our getting to know other people. We may work side by side with certain individuals and never really get to know them as persons. We may work side by side with some people and never know their hurts and needs.

Jesus not only recognized and affirmed the Samaritan woman, he sought to give her the "water of life eternal". In his gentle manner Jesus turned the woman's focus from "material water" to "spiritual water". The Samaritan woman must have been shocked at the response of this man Jesus. For here was one man who was not after her body nor cared that she was racially different from him. His sole concern was to introduce her to a new way of life.

A Woman Turned Witness (John 4:25-30, 39)

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APPOMATTOX, (VA.)-TIMES-VIRGINIAN-JANUARY 31, 1980

The pastor speaks

What is evangelism?

What is evangelism? Dr. Gaines S. Dobbins said, "Evangelism, in the broadest sense, means any testimony borne to another by a Christian with a view to making Christ known and accepted. This witness may be borne in sermon, in song, in personal conversation, by the spoken or the written word, or by the influence of character and conduct."

Let us think about one of the great evangelists in the Bible, "Philip the evangelist." Following the death of Stephen, an attempt was made to stamp out the fires of evangelism in the church at Jerusalem. But this attempt only scattered the fire to other places, because they that were scattered abroad went everywhere evangelizing and witnessing. Among those who were scattered abroad was Philip the evangelist who went to Samaria. The scripture says, "Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them." "And there was great joy in that city."

All evangelism, all witnessing must have its source in Christ. Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me."

Jesus intended for every Christian to be a witness, to witness by his life and his lips, to the validity of the claims of Jesus and to the reality of his saving power.

Rev. G. Edward Hughes, Pastor
Red Oak Baptist Church

The Samaritan woman personally encountered the Messiah, and her brush with Jesus radically altered her life. We are not told the details of her response, but we are told that she went and shared her experience with many other Samaritans, who, in turn, came to meet and believe in Jesus.

The response of the disciples to seeing Jesus talking with a Samaritan is probably not a typical. They held to the same prejudices towards the Samaritans as everyone else. They were somewhat shocked that Jesus would even speak to a Samaritan. Just the fact that Jesus was talking to a woman left the disciples speechless. Jesus broke all taboos and cultural norms when he spoke to the woman.

To cross cultural and social barriers and to communicate remains a taboo in many parts of our society. I think Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman forces us to reevaluate our attitudes towards people of other cultural, politicial, sexual, and religious persuasions. A Christian sees people through eyes that differ from the view of those who approach all other "different" people with mistrust and hatred.

The Samaritan woman turned out to be a "star witness" for Jesus. She went immediately from the well to share her encounter with the man who offered her eternal life. The biblical narrative states that many people believed in Jesus because of her. She became the doorway whereby Jesus could offer his "living water" to the Samaritan people.

The narrative says that the woman went home, leaving her watergot at the well. Though she apparently forgot her water vessel, she certainly did not forget who Jesus was. In Jesus she met a man - The God-man - whose compassionate spirit brought her face to face with the love of God.

Our treatment of other people does have its rewards. A compassionate approach to people will win us new friends and, perhaps, new disciples for our Lord.

Dr. Trimyer is pastor of Elon Baptist Church in Pamplin, Va.

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Outstanding youths cited

The Virginia Division for children has recognized the meritorious service of young Virginians by the awarding of 44 certificates of commendation. Those considered for this award were nominated by the organization or agency through which the young person worked in providing meritorious service to his community, city or state. The service by the student, excluding athletic and scholastic achievements, must have occurred during the calendar years 1978-1979, lasting for at least a six month period, and demonstrating the person's commitment to the betterment of humanity.

Appomattox County is proud of four local high school students who competed for the honor of being named a "Young Virginian." In addition to a biographical sketch of the candidate, each nomination included a written recommendation from the person or organization benefiting from the service and a written recommendation from another person or organization who was aware of the service being provided and of the benefits that were being gained from this service. All nominations were sent to the Virginia Division for Children, Richmond, and were reviewed by a five-member awards committee.

Susan Parris, daughter of Mr and Mrs. R. B. Parris, Jr. and a senior at Appomattox County High School, was nominated by the Appomattox County Extension Service for her work with children through 4-H activities. Susan received a certificate of merit for her involvement and service through 4-H.

Also receiving certificates of merit were Sandra Ferguson, a senior at ACHS, and Stephanie Ferguson, a junior this year. Sandra, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Ferguson, and Stephanie, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Herman Ferguson, were both nominated by the Lynchburg Junior Volunteer Service. Both Sandra and Stephanie have unselfishly given time and talent as volunteer aides at Lynchburg-General Marshall Lodge Hospital.

A fourth student to receive a certificate of merit is David Totty, a freshman at ACHS this year. David, a son of Mr. and Mrs. David E. Totty, was nominated by his Boy Scout Troup Leader for his work in planning and constructing a recreational area at St. Anne's Episcopal Church.

These four young people did not become finalists who actually received titles of "Outstanding Young Virginians," but we are very proud of them and their services to the community.

Hamlett promoted

Reginald L. Hamlett, son of Thelma Hamlett of Appomattox, Va., has received his first promotion in the U. S. Air Force.

Hamlett, promoted to airman, is assigned to Mountain Home Air Force Base, here, as an administrative specialist.

Beef referendum

[Continued from page 1]

majority of producers will be sufficient for approval.

Rules for registering and voting have changed. It was determined that 10 days would be sufficient for all producers to register and that the four-day voting period would result in a more efficient voting procedure and reduce administrative costs. Copies of referendum rules can be obtained from the ASCS office.

Registration and voting can be completed by mail, if information and ballots are requested in advance.

The Beef Research and Information program would be administered by a board of up to 68 producers and five non-voting consumer advisors. Each state would be represented on the board in proportion to its share of the cattle industry. The program would be funded by assessments based on the value of cattle sold.

All sellers in the marketing chain would be assessed and the buyer at the point of slaughter would deduct the total assessment and forward it to the board. Any producer could request and receive a refund of the assessment paid.

For more information on the beef referendum contact the ASCS office.

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APPOMATTOX, (VA.)-TIMES-VIRGINIAN-JANUARY 31, 1980

Scouts slate open house

Above are students receiving Young Virginian Certificates of Merit. Front, left to right, Stephanie Ferguson and Susan Parris; standing behind, left to right, David Totty and Sandra Ferguson.

The members of Boy Scout Troop 546, Appomattox, are holding an open house for all interested boys, ages 8-18, and their parents. The open house will be held at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 6, at St. Anne's Episcopal Church in Appomattox.

The evening's program will include slide presentations on the troop's activities, the Council summer camp, and the High Knoll Adventure camp.

Members will have presentations on the Scouting program, Scout skills and the past seventy years of the Scouting movement.

In addition, representatives from the Appomattox Cub Scout pack and Explorer post will be on hand to answer questions regarding their programs. Any questions about troop 546, or the Open House, should be directed to one of the members; James Vaughan-Junior Assbtant Scoutmaster; Luis Garcia-Junior Assistant Scoutmaster; Myles King-Troop Leadership Corps; David Totty-Senior Patrol Leader; Ben Martin-Assistant Senior Patrol Leader; Mike Carmody-Patrol Leader-Cherokee; Todd Thompson-Patrol Leader-Paratroopers; Eduardo Garcia-Cherokee-Historian; Ronald Reed - Cherokee - Quartermaster; Johnny Blankenship-Cherokee; Bentley Nash-Cherokee-Librarian; Lynn Martin-Paratroopers; Darryll Martin-Paratroopers; or Roger Steinkamp-Paratroopers-Scribe.

Troop 546 February Program

Feb. 2 Klondike Derby - cross country sled race including contests on scout skills.

Feb. 3 Scout Sunday - St. Anne's Church 9:30, all members in full uniform.

Feb. 6 Scout Open House - all scouts in full uniform, parents invited to attend.

Feb. 8 Seventy years of Scouting.

The remainder of the month's program includes weekly meetings at St. Anne's Church at 7 p.m. on Wednesday nights and an overnite campout at the end of the month. On the program during the year will be trips to Washington, D. C. Norfolk Naval Base, Kings Dominon and Caverns in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The outdoor program includes monthly campouts and hikes, a 50 mile canoe trip, week-long summer campouts and a multitude of District and Council Events.

The Boy Scout program is for and about boys. The boys plan and carry out all their own activities. The members of 546, feel Scouting is a great experience in learning, adventure, personal growth and character development but most of all it's fun! Won't you come and join the group? Come to the Open House and see what Scouting is all about.

Handicapped program

(Continued from Page 1)

state area for the National Association for Retarded Citizens. Witt explained the program, but his audience was small: three businessmen were present, along with school guidance personnel and central officed supervisors.

"We hope we can get this program going in Appomattox," Hesson says. "Many of these students will make good employees. Often the problem is just that the student doesn't verbalize well enough to sell himself to a potential employer."

"In the final analysis, the thrust of what an EMR student has are those things that make him a self-sufficient individual," Hesson says.

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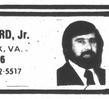
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